United Nations CRC/C/OPSC/SAU/Q/1/Add.1

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General
25 July 2018
English
Original: Arabic
Arabic, English and Spanish only

Committee on the Rights of the Child
Seventy-ninth session
17 September–5 October 2018
Agenda item 4 of the provisional agenda
Consideration of reports of States parties

List of issues in relation to the report submitted by Saudi Arabia under article 12 (1) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

Addendum

Replies of Saudi Arabia to the list of issues*

[Date received: 13 June 2018]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

GE.18-12331 (E) 140818 140818

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Replies of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the list of issues in relation to its initial report under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (CRC/C/OPSC/SAU/Q/1)

Introduction

1. The present document contains the replies and comments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the list of issues raised by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/OPSC/SAU/Q/1) in relation to the initial report of Saudi Arabia[1] under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.[2] Attention is drawn to the fact that various legislative and procedural measures have been taken with a view to promoting human rights, including those enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child[3] and the Protocol. Those measures will be illustrated in the course of the replies to the issues raised, which are given in the same order as that in which they appear in the list.

Reply to paragraph 1

2. As noted in paragraph 17 of the report, steps are being taken to establish databases that will facilitate efforts to measure progress in the area of human rights, including the fulfilment of the Kingdom's obligations under the human rights instruments to which it is a party, including the Convention and the Protocol. The Human Rights Commission, which monitors Government departments in their application of the human rights instruments to which Saudi Arabia has acceded, and the General Authority for Statistics have taken coordinated action to collect, analyse, disseminate and facilitate access to data on human rights obtained in a systematic and scientific manner from surveys and administrative records.

Reply to paragraph 2

3. No offences involving acts of child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism have been reported. Efforts to combat trafficking in persons have resulted in an increasing number of prosecutions and convictions. In 2015, 22 complaints of trafficking in persons were filed with the Human Rights Commission, equivalent to 1 per cent of the total number of complaints filed. In 2016, the Human Rights Commission received 15 complaints, equivalent to 0.6 per cent of the total number of complaints. Between 2012 and 2017, a total of 475 cases involving trafficking in persons were brought before the courts. In 2017, inspectors from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development identified 57 cases of trafficking. No offences involving the exploitation of children for the purpose of sale, prostitution or organ transfer have been reported, and almost all reported cases of child trafficking have been for the purpose of engagement in forced labour or begging.

4. A number of laws criminalize all forms of child pornography, including the Child Protection Act, referred to in paragraph 30 of the report, and the Repression of Cybercrime Act, referred to in paragraph 32. Between A.H. 1436 (2015) and A.H. 1439 (2018), the Office of the Public Prosecutor initiated criminal proceedings in 405 cases involving child pornography and exploitation via the Internet and technical media.

[1] Hereinafter "the report".
[2] Hereinafter "the Protocol".
[3] Hereinafter "the Convention".

Reply to paragraph 3

5. The statutory functions of the Human Rights Commission include formulating general policy for the development of human rights awareness, working with educational, training and media institutions and agencies and social media and using the Human Rights Commission website to foster a culture of human rights and raise awareness of human rights issues, convening and participating in conferences and symposiums on human rights issues, and publishing bulletins, magazines and other printed materials on the goals of the Commission and its competencies. The Commission's awareness-raising activities include underscoring the seriousness of the offences set forth in the Protocol.

6. Furthermore, Supreme Order No. 13084 of 27 Rabi' I A.H. 1436 (18 January A.D. 2015) authorized the drafting of a national human rights strategy that would incorporate all principles and rules that provide for the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with the principles of Islamic sharia, the Basic Law of Governance, other relevant laws and the regional and international human rights conventions to which the Kingdom is a party. The strategy would also draw on a number of regional and international declarations, programmes and methodologies. A committee composed of representatives of relevant government and non-governmental bodies is currently drafting the strategy, which comprises six pillars, namely the legal framework, institutional capacities, civil society, the business sector, a human rights culture, and regional and international cooperation, and provides for a number of goals, programmes and initiatives that address the full range of human rights.

7. The Child Committee of the Family Affairs Council, referred to in paragraph 35 of the report, also seeks to raise awareness of the rights of the child and underscores the seriousness of any violations of those rights, including the violations set forth in the Protocol. The National Commission for Childhood, referred to in paragraphs 36 and 111 of the report, has also played a key role in that regard.

8. With regard to national plans and strategies for the promotion of children's rights in Saudi Arabia, attention is drawn to an integrated series of initiatives launched under the National Transformation Programme (part of the Vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030) to address all aspects of family violence and violence against children. Those initiatives include the following:

- Establishing a family protection authority;
- Developing mechanisms to facilitate cooperation among stakeholders engaged in efforts to combat violence;
- Conducting awareness-raising campaigns to help increase awareness of domestic violence;
- Developing an integrated package of services to help victims and perpetrators of violence, both when domestic violence is ongoing and after it has ended;
- Establishing communications bureaus;
- Establishing family counselling centres.

9. The Protection from Violence Commission of the Family Affairs Council is formulating a national strategy on domestic violence, in line with the National Transformation Programme and the international instruments to which Saudi Arabia has acceded, including the Convention and the Protocol. The Family Affairs Council is also working with the competent authorities to draw up a national strategy to combat child exploitation online.

10. The legal and institutional frameworks, procedural measures implemented by relevant stakeholders, and steps taken by oversight bodies, including civil society institutions all prevent children becoming victims of the offences set forth in the Protocol. Article 2 of the Child Protection Act, promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/14 of A.H. 3 Safar 1436 (25 November 2014), reaffirms the provisions of the Islamic sharia and of the international treaties to which the Kingdom is a party, which safeguard children's rights

and protect them from all forms of abuse and neglect. The Act defines and seeks to raise awareness of children's rights and defines a number of acts as child abuse or neglect. These include interrupting the child's education, ill-treatment, harassment or exploitation, the use of offensive words that undermine the child's dignity and all forms of racial, social and economic discrimination. The Act also prohibits the production, publication, presentation, circulation and possession of any material aimed at children with a view to shaping or arousing their instincts in a manner conducive to behaviour that violates the provisions of the Islamic sharia or that undermines public order or morals. Furthermore, article 6, paragraph 2 of the Anti-harassment Act, promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/96 of A.H. 16 Ramadan 1439 (31 May 2018) provides for penalties to be increased if the victim of an act of harassment is a child.

Reply to paragraph 4

11. Saudi Arabia strives to allocate a large proportion of its annual budget to initiatives that promote the interests of children, including those that facilitate implementation of the Protocol. Resources are allocated to government bodies directly concerned with that area, including the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. The Ministry of Finance verifies the correct disbursement of budget allocations to ensure that resources are used for the benefit of relevant groups, including children. As the procedures for preparing the State budget are based on general items covering all age groups, it is difficult to determine the resources spent on implementation of the Protocol. The government agencies concerned with children's affairs or in specific areas review the financial expenditure on the sectors they supervise, including the child sector, and identify areas where spending should be increased. This is then reviewed with the Ministry of Finance when the annual budget is discussed.

12. The Human Rights Commission monitors implementation by government bodies of the Kingdom's obligations under human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also publishes annual reports in which it highlights where efforts exerted have failed to achieve anticipated outcomes and provide reasons for those shortcomings, such as the provision of inadequate financial resources or the fact that those resources have been spent ineffectively. The required steps are then taken to address those situations. Civil society institutions, including the National Society for Human Rights, also monitor any potential shortcomings.

Reply to paragraph 5

13. The Kingdom's laws ensure that children enjoy their rights and are provided with the protections they require on a non-discriminatory basis, and set forth have been taken to achieve and sustain those objectives. Those laws ensure that children who are most vulnerable to violations of their rights due to their special circumstances, living conditions or family situations are accorded special attention. Under article 7 of the Child Protection Act, children who lack an appropriate family environment and are at risk of abuse or neglect have the right to alternative care in a foster family or, if no such family is available, in social welfare institutions run by the Government, civil society or charitable organizations. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development takes all possible steps to uphold that principle, in cooperation with relevant Government agencies and civil society institutions.

14. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development has launched two programmes for children deprived of a family environment. One is the Foster Families Programme, under which families provide comprehensive and lasting care for orphans, ensuring that they enjoy psychological security and emotional contentment. The second is the Friendly Family Programme, which allows orphans be looked after on a part-time basis by families wishing to provide such care. Children who cannot be accommodated by families are provided with great care in social care facilities, where male and female psychologists and social workers ensure that all their needs, including their psychological and social needs, are met.

15. Numerous steps have been taken to address poverty — one of the factors that increases the risk that children will fall victim to the offences set forth in the Protocol — including, in particular, the issuance of Supreme Order No. 24535 of 22 February 2017 on the adoption of a poverty line in Saudi Arabia and poverty indicators. The Social Development Bank has also launched a number of initiatives and programmes, including a project on productive families and empowerment through self-employment, which provides support and financing in a number of sectors to micro-enterprises, productive family projects and craft cottage industries in the Kingdom, and the professional household project, which provides non-financial services to help individuals, families, small business owners and productive family enterprises (home-based projects) develop and manage their business activities. The project offers stakeholders training and support services, uses innovative approaches to help them develop and market their products effectively both on the domestic market and abroad, provides training to employees to help businesses move forward, and strengthens coordination among relevant authorities and facilitates their activities.

16. Social security benefits have been increased by raising the maximum social security benefit that can be received by a family from 16,000 riyals (SRIs) to SRI 31,100 per year. Saudi Arabia has also strengthened its social support programmes for eligible beneficiaries, including the productive families programme, the mattresses and furniture programme, the satchel and school uniform programme, the cash assistance for food programme, the electricity and water bill programme, and the home renovation programme. SRI 2 billion has been earmarked for the establishment of a specialized programme to help needy families launch small business enterprises, and SRI 1.5 billion set aside to support enterprises under the productive families project so that families can acquire capital-intensive equipment, avail themselves of necessary services and other inputs and launch their business activities. Saudi Arabia has also launched the Citizen Account programme, which seeks to mitigate the potential impact of economic reforms enacted under the Vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030 by making cash payments to citizens with low or modest incomes. Women comprise 55 per cent of entrepreneur beneficiaries and 25 per cent of head of household beneficiaries, even though they comprise only 7 per cent of heads of household in Saudi Arabia.

17. Domestic violence is considered a criminal offence under the country's laws. A number of recently promulgated laws have strengthened the legal framework for combating violence, including the Protection from Abuse Act, which not only criminalizes abuse, but also addresses behavioural phenomena that exacerbate abuse within society. In the light of its negative physical, psychological and social impact, and the fact that abuse may take place out of sight and perpetrators may not be held accountable for their actions, serious or lesser offences involving abuse must be addressed as a matter of priority. The Protection from Abuse Act obliges all who become aware of abuse to report it forthwith. Similarly, employees must report all cases of abuse to their employers as soon as they become aware of them. Furthermore, employers must immediately inform the competent authorities or the police of any cases of abuse that come to their attention. The executive regulations of the Act provide, inter alia, for the establishment of a centre to receive allegations of abuse. The Protection from Abuse Act, the Child Protection Act and the Anti-harassment Act provide a legal framework for combating violence against children.

18. Numerous measures have also been taken to combat the phenomenon of child begging, including, most notably, the establishment, in cooperation with civil society institutions, of shelters providing support, protection and decent accommodation to beggars under the age of 18. Those shelters provide child beggars with social, health and psychological care until they can be returned to their families. Their families are, moreover, studied with a view to addressing their particular circumstances, understanding the reasons for such behaviour and instituting remedial action (as a curative measure) to prevent a recurrence of the phenomenon. These measures have led to a reduction in begging on the streets.

19. It should be underscored that the Kingdom's laws, including the Child Protection Act, uphold children's rights on an inclusive and non-discriminatory basis and protect the rights of children regardless of their status, situation or circumstances. Consequently, all children in the Saudi Arabia enjoy the same protection and care.

20. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development formulates plans, strategies and programmes to provide care and social safety nets for disadvantaged children and children dealing with health, psychological, social, educational and cultural challenges, including, in particular, children who find it difficult to deal with the social and economic problems they encounter. Comprehensive care is provided to young orphan children, children who are do not receive appropriate care from their families or communities, as well as to children with disabilities and children exposed to various forms of violence. The Ministry accords particular attention to children who are most vulnerable to violations of their rights, such as orphans, children with disabilities, and children deprived of an appropriate family environment. Children with difficult family situations who may be subjected to abuse and neglect enjoy the right to be cared for by foster families or, if no foster families can be found, at social care institutions run by the Government, civil society organizations or charitable institutions.

21. Children in Saudi Arabia are placed in care institutions only as a last resort. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development makes every effort, in collaboration with relevant Government bodies and civil society organizations, to uphold that principle.

22. Children who cannot be accommodated by families are provided with great care in social care facilities, where male and female psychologists and social workers ensure that all their needs, including their psychological and social needs, are met. As of the date of writing, a total of 8396 orphans are being cared for by foster families.

23. The Ministry of Labour and Social Development also encourages citizens to volunteer their services with a view to addressing the needs of individuals and groups in their local areas and to form charitable organizations in various fields in different parts of the country to that end. Mother and child care programmes are some of the most important initiatives run by charitable and social development institutions. Activities include:

- The design and implementation by civil society organizations specializing in the provision of guidance and counselling of educational programmes that aim to raise awareness of sexual harassment on social media. Those programmes are designed to reach families and children and are implemented in cooperation with the competent authorities;
- Expanding maternal and child education programmes with a view to educating mothers on how to care for their children and keep them safe;
- Encouraging members of society to establish an association to raise children's awareness of the dangers of the Internet, or an association to increase awareness of inappropriate behaviour towards children on the Internet;
- Encouraging members of society to establish charitable associations to provide guidance to individuals on how to use the Internet and on upholding community values on social media;
- Encouraging members of society to establish community childcare associations and committees;
- Developing family counselling centres across the Kingdom;
- Collaborating with specialized bodies on the design of targeted awareness programmes that have an effective social and cultural impact.

24. The Mother and Child Education Programme, which was approved as part of the A.H. 1439 (2018) annual plan, has been launched by the Ministry of Education in partnership with the Child Welfare Association in 40 social development centres throughout Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the Child Awareness-raising against Sexual Harassment Programme will be implemented by a number of social development committees and, with a view to bolstering the mechanisms for receiving complaints of abuse and violence, the Centre for the Receipt of Communications was opened on 20 March 2016. The women staff members of the Centre may be contacted around the clock on a single phone number (1919) to submit reports of domestic violence, and protection teams have been set up in all regions and governorates to receive reports, complete necessary procedural steps, assist victims and, if there is sufficient evidence that an offence

has been committed against an individual, refer the case to the Office of the Public Prosecutor so that legal proceedings can be initiated, in accordance with the Protection from Abuse Act.

25. Article 6, paragraph 2 of the Anti-harassment Act, promulgated by Royal Decree No. M/96 of A.H. 16 Ramadan 1439 (1 June 2018) provides that the penalty for the offence of harassment shall be imprisonment for a term of up to 5 years and a fine of up to SRI 300,000 (equivalent to $80,000) if the victim is a child or a person with special needs or if the offence is perpetrated in a place of study, care or shelter.

Reply to paragraph 6

26. There have been no reported cases of children in Saudi Arabia living permanently on the street (i.e. children who have no shelter other than the streets). Children on the street in Saudi Arabia are engaged exclusively in begging, selling merchandise and other similar activities. Further to the information provided in paragraph 16 of this submission, it should be underscored that the Child Protection Act addresses all those issues. Indeed, article 18 of that Act requires relevant parties to take all appropriate measures to alleviate the suffering of children living in difficult circumstances, such as contested children in disputes, vagrant children on the street and child victims of disasters and wars. Homes have been established to provide support, protection and care to child beggars and street vendors, and those homes provide a secure environment in which child victims can overcome the negative repercussions of those activities.

27. The exploitation of children for the purposes of begging, forced labour or similar activities is criminalized under the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act, referred to several times in the report, as a trafficking in persons offence. Offenders are liable to imprisonment for a term of up to 15 years and to a fine of up to SRI 1 million. A draft suppression of begging act is currently under consideration with a view to combating that phenomenon and addressing its root causes. That draft act provides a definition of beggars and sets forth procedures for following up on and evaluating their situation and providing them with necessary rehabilitation and educational services.

28. The Standing National Committee to Combat Trafficking in Persons, established pursuant to Council of Ministers Decision No. 244 of A.H. 20 Rajab 1430 (13 July 2009), monitors implementation of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act and may recommend, if the situation so requires, that victims should be permitted to remain in the Kingdom and have their status regularized so that they can seek employment.

29. The Child Protection Act also prohibits all manifestations of child abuse and neglect. These include all threats to their safety or to their physical or psychological health, interference with their education, or their presence in an environment in which they may be exposed to danger, subject to ill-treatment or exploitation, engage in criminal activity or begging, or are flagrantly and continually deprived of education and care. The Act identifies circumstances in which children are considered to be at risk of delinquency, such as if they are involved in begging or engage in unlawful acts, if they are not under the authority of their parents or guardians, if they habitually run away from home or from an educational institution or shelter, or if they habitually sleep in places not intended for habitation.

30. Children exploited through begging or forced labour are treated as victims rather than as offenders under the Kingdom's laws and are not, therefore, subject to arrest. If they are foreign nationals, they are subject to deportation only once they have received redress and social, psychological and legal assistance.

Reply to paragraph 7

31. The Kingdom's laws criminalize all forms of child exploitation, including child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism. Those laws include the Child Protection Act, according to which the sexual exploitation of children is considered a form of criminal

abuse. Article 9 of that Act prohibits the sexual exploitation of children and the exposure of children to forms of sexual exploitation. The provisions of the Act apply to all citizens and residents in Saudi Arabia on the basis of the principle of territoriality, and to Saudi citizens who perpetrate such offences outside the country on the basis of the principle of legal personality. Saudi citizens abroad do not enjoy legal immunity unless they have been punished for those offences in the country in which they were committed.

32. Saudi Arabia is a member of the World Tourism Organization and is therefore committed to upholding the Organization's rules and regulations on travel and tourism activities, including the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.

33. Furthermore, tourists and tourism service providers must abide by the laws of the Kingdom and the agreements and protocols to which it had acceded, including the Protocol. The Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage has issued codes of conduct on tourism behaviour for tourism service providers and tourists in general. Those codes set forth rules that promote respect for the country's laws, values and customs, protect the country's resources, historical sites and cultural heritage, and safeguard the environment.

Reply to paragraph 8

34. As noted in paragraph 77 of the report, article 2 of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act stipulates that all forms of trafficking in persons, including for the purposes of forced labour or services, the removal of organs or the conduct of medical experiments, are prohibited. Article 4 of the same Act stipulates that harsher penalties are prescribed where the offence is committed against a child, even if the offender was unaware that the victim was a minor. Furthermore, article 9 (3) of the implementing regulations of the Child Protection Act prohibits the abduction of children, the sale of children or their organs, the trafficking in children for any purpose or in any form and the exploitation of children for the purpose of begging.

35. Article 8 of the Child Protection Act prohibits the employment of children under the age of 15 as well as their employment in work that may be detrimental to their physical or mental health. It also prohibits their employment in military activities or armed conflicts. Article 8 (8) of the implementing regulations of that Act provides: "It is prohibited to employ children in any type of work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is conducted, may jeopardize their health, safety or moral integrity. It is prohibited, in particular, to employ children in the worst forms of child labour, as defined in relevant international conventions." The Employment Act includes a whole section regulating the employment of juveniles, which, inter alia, prohibits the employment of children in dangerous work or hazardous industries or in professions or jobs that may endanger their health, safety or moral integrity. No person under the age of 15 may be employed. However, the Minister of Labour and Social Development may raise that age limit in certain industries or areas or for certain categories of juveniles. The Act also empowers the Minister, in exceptional circumstances, to allow persons between the ages of 13 and 15 to perform light work, provided that that work does not harm their health or physical development, negatively affect their attendance at school, their participation in vocational training programmes, or their capacity to benefit from the education they receive, and does not contravene other regulations on the employment of juveniles. The employment of children in violation of those legal provisions is deemed a serious or lesser offence; penalties for those offences are prescribed by law.

Reply to paragraph 9

36. Article 1 of the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act defines trafficking as: "The use, recruitment, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons for the purpose of exploitation" and defines a child as "any person under the age of 18". Article 2 of that Act stipulates that: "All forms of trafficking in persons are prohibited, including coercion, intimidation, fraud, deception, abduction, exploitation of one's office or influence, abuse of

power or exploitation of vulnerability, giving or receiving payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of sexual abuse, forced labour or services, begging, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, the removal of organs or the conduct of medical experimentation." The forms of trafficking in persons specified in the Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Act are not exclusive, and the acts and activities related to the sale of children covered in article 2 (a) and article 3 (1) (a) (i) of the Protocol are criminalized under that Act as trafficking in persons offences. The Act broadens the definition of trafficking in children beyond that provided by the Protocol to include exploitation for the purposes of begging. The Act is, moreover, complemented by other laws that criminalize the acts and activities addressed in the aforementioned articles of the Protocol, including the Child Protection Act, the Protection from Abuse Act and the Repression of Cybercrime Act, which are referred to in detail in the report.

37. Article 9 of the Child Protection Act provides: "It is prohibited to exploit a child sexually, to expose him or her to sexual exploitation or to traffic a child for criminal purposes or begging." Articles 9 (1), 9 (2) and 9 (3) of the implementing regulations of that Act stipulate that the competent authorities shall protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation, including, in particular, efforts to cause or compel the child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity or exploit the child in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices. The sexual exploitation of children includes subjecting them, whether directly or indirectly, to prostitution, irrespective of their gender and whether or not this is in exchange for payment. The use or exploitation of children in pornography or in pornographic performances is prohibited. The competent authorities shall take all appropriate measures to prevent the abduction of children, the sale of children or their organs, the trafficking in children for any purpose or in any form and the exploitation of children for the purposes of begging. Article 3 (14) of the implementing regulations obligates the competent authorities to prevent the exploitation of children in commercial transactions or petty or organized criminal activities and to prevent child begging or vagrancy. Article 4 (1) of the implementing regulations stipulates that "The parents or guardians of a child shall not allow the child to beg or exploit the child for the purposes of begging or for any other unlawful purpose."

38. Any international or regional instrument to which Saudi Arabia accedes, or which it has ratified, is considered to be part of domestic law and imposes the same level of legal obligation as national legislation. This is because the legal mechanism whereby laws are passed in Saudi Arabia is the same whereby the country accedes to or ratifies international instruments and treaties. According to article 70 of the Basic Law of Governance, "laws, international agreements, treaties and concessions shall be approved and amended by Royal Decree". This also applies to the Protocol, which is thus part of Saudi Arabian law.

Reply to paragraph 10

39. The Kingdom's laws and regulations to protect children's rights include provisions on child victims of violations, including the violations set forth in the Protocol, and on establishing their circumstances. The Child Protection Act and its implementing regulations include provisions that focus on prevention and broaden the scope of the terms abuse and neglect by criminalizing acts that were not previously considered criminal offences, such as denying a child family support, failing to procure, make available or safeguard a child's identity documents, failing to complete a child's mandatory health vaccinations, and interrupting a child's education. Article 4 of the Act provides for early warning, and identifies circumstances in which children are at risk of delinquency, such as when they are not under the authority of their parents or guardians, or when they habitually run away from home or from educational institutions or shelters. Article 5 of the Act stipulates that: "The child shall, in all cases, be given priority in terms of protection, care and relief." Article 16 stipulates that: "All parties shall take the interests of the child into account in all relevant procedures and expedite their completion. They shall also take into account the child's mental, psychological, physical and educational needs, in accordance with the child's age, health and other factors." Article 18 also requires relevant parties to take all appropriate measures to alleviate the suffering of children living in difficult circumstances, such as

contested children in a dispute, vagrant children on the street and child victims of disasters and wars. These provisions also apply to unaccompanied children. Furthermore, in partnership with a civil society organization, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre is implementing a project for child soldiers, the aim being to rehabilitate minors who have been involved in or affected by conflict. The project, which seeks to assist 2,000 children, had rehabilitated 160 children by April 2018. The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre also works with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to broaden the scope of its child protection programmes.

Reply to paragraph 11

40. Article 13 of the Child Protection Act prohibits the participation of children in races or in sporting and recreational activities that endanger their health or safety. Furthermore, article 13 (2) of the Act's implementing regulations prohibits the participation of children in races or in sporting and recreational activities that endanger their health or safety, such as camel races. Relevant authorities are obliged to abide by that prohibition. Government and non-governmental bodies exercising an oversight role, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Human Rights Commission and the National Society for Human Rights monitor compliance.